



MISSOURI DIVISION OF FIRE SAFETY

CARBON MONOXIDE: *INVISIBLE, ODORLESS, DEADLY!*

Carbon monoxide (CO) is a colorless, odorless, poisonous gas. It is produced by the incomplete burning of solid, liquid, and gaseous fuels. Appliances fueled with natural gas, LP gas, oil, kerosene, coal, or wood may produce CO. Burning charcoal produces CO. Running cars produces CO.

Every year, over 200 people in the United States die from CO poisoning from fuel-burning appliances, burning charcoal inside, and generators or cars running in garages. Several thousand people go to hospital emergency rooms for treatment for CO poisoning.

Be alert for the symptoms of CO poisoning!

The initial symptoms of CO poisoning are similar to the flu (but without the fever):

- ☒ Headache
- ☒ Fatigue
- ☒ Shortness of breath
- ☒ Nausea
- ☒ Dizziness

Many people with CO poisoning mistake their symptoms for the flu or are misdiagnosed by physicians, which sometimes results in tragic deaths.

If you think you are experiencing any of the symptoms of CO poisoning, get fresh air immediately. Call 911 or your fire department and seek medical attention immediately. You could lose consciousness and die if you do nothing.

What should you do to prevent CO poisoning?

- ☒ Never use gasoline-powered generators and engines indoors.
- ☒ Gasoline-powered generators **MUST BE** located outside of any structure, including an attached garage.
- ☒ Never burn charcoal inside a home, garage, vehicle, or tent.
- ☒ Never use portable fuel-burning camping equipment inside a home, garage, vehicle, or tent.
- ☒ Never use gas appliances such as ranges, ovens, or clothes dryers for heating your home.
- ☒ Never leave a car running in an attached garage, even with the garage door open.
- ☒ Never operate unvented fuel-burning appliances in any room with closed doors or windows or in any room where people are sleeping.
- ☒ Make sure appliances are installed according to manufacturer's instructions and local building codes. Most appliances should be installed by professionals. Have the heating system (including chimneys and vents) inspected and serviced annually. The inspector should also check chimneys and flues for blockages, corrosion, partial and complete disconnections, and loose connections.
- ☒ Install an approved UL listed CO detector/alarm.